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Cherra Hills	127	163
Shillong	60	104
Total	6,861*	

The following information regarding the general aspect of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills district, with some additions, is derived from Sir William Hunter's Statistical Account of Assam. The district consists almost entirely of hills, only a very small portion lying in the plains. The slope of the hills on the southern side is very steep until a table-land is met with at an elevation of about 4,000 feet at Cherrapunji. Higher up there is another plateau at Mawphlang. This is the highest portion of the hills, some villages being found at as high an elevation as close on 6,000 feet above sea level. Fifteen miles to the east of Mawphlang, and in the same range, is situated the civil station of Shillong, at an average elevation of about 4,900 feet. The elevation of the Shillong Peak, the highest hill in the district, is 6,450 feet above sea level. On the northern side of the hills are two plateaux, one between 1,000 and 2,000 feet below the level of Shillong, and another at an elevation of about 2,000 feet above sea level. In general features all these plateaux are much alike, and consist of a succession of undulating downs, broken here and there by the valleys of the larger hill streams. In the higher ranges, where the hills have been denuded of forest, the country is covered with short grass, which becomes longer and more rank in the lower elevations. This denudation of forest has been largely due to the wood being used by the Khasis for fuel for iron smelting in days gone by. The Government, however, has taken steps to protect the remaining forests from further spoliation. A remarkable feature in the presence of extensive sacred groves situated generally just below the brows of the hills. In these woods are to be found principally oak and rhododendron trees. The fir-tree (Pinus Khasia) is first met with on the road from Gauhati to Shillong, at Umsning, at an elevation of about 2,500 feet. In the neighbourhood of Shillong the fir grows profusely, but the finest fir-trees are to be seen

* The figures for Khasi population in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills district will be found under "Habitat."

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work is done. In order to attend to a Khasi house, you have to climb up a crooked pole. The Khasis sacrifice a he-goat and a fowl to *Kit-Sngiong* (Khasi, *Kmaiew Sing*), the household god, when they build a new house.

VILLAGES.

Unlike the Naga and Kukis, the Khasis do not build their villages on the extreme summits of hills, but a little below the tops, generally in small depressions, in order to obtain some protection from the strong winds and storms which prevail in these hills at certain times of the year. According to the late U Jaslem Roy, it is easy, or taboo, to the Khasis to build a house on the last eminence of a range of hills, this custom having perhaps arisen owing to the necessity of locating villages with reference to their defence against an enemy. Khasis build their houses fairly close together, but not as close as houses in the Khasi and Lyngngam villages. Khasis seldom change the sites of their villages, to which they are very much attached, where, as a rule, the family tombs are standing and the *mawbynna* or memorial stones. In many villages stone circles or and memorial stones are to be seen which from their appearance show that the villages have been there for many generations. During the Jaintia rebellion the village of *Jowai* was almost entirely destroyed, but as soon as the rebellion was over the people returned to the old site and rebuilt their village. Similarly, after the earthquake, the ancient village sites were not abandoned in many cases, but the people rebuilt their houses in their former positions, although in Shillong and Cherrapunji they rebuilt the walls of the houses of wooden materials instead of stone. There is no such thing as a specially reserved area in the village *i.e.* the Siem and the nobility, all the people, rich or poor, living together in one village, their houses being scattered about indiscriminately. To the democratic Khasi the idea of the Siem living apart from his people would be repugnant. In the vicinity of the Khasi village, often just below the brow of the hill to the leeward side, are to be seen dark woods of oak

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and other trees. These are the sacred groves. Here the villagers worship U *synglow* U *hoon*, the tutelary deity of the village. These groves are taboo, and it is an offence to cut trees therein for any purpose other than for performing funeral ceremonies. The groves are generally not more than a few hundred yards away from the villages. The villages of the Syntengs are similar in character to those of the Khasis. The War villages nestle on the hill-sides of the southern border, and are to be seen peeping out from the green foliage with which the southern slopes are clad. In the vicinity of, and actually up to the houses, in the War villages, are to be observed large groves of areca-nut, often twined with the *pan* creeper, and of plantain trees, which much enhance the beauty of the scene. Looking at a War village from a distance, a darker shade of green is seen; this denotes the limits of the extensive groves where the justly celebrated Khasi orange is grown, which is the source of so much profit to these people. The houses in the War villages are generally closer together than those of the Khasis, probably owing to space being limited, and to the villages being located on the slopes of hills. Generally up the narrow village street, and from house to house, there are rough steep stone steps, the upper portion of a village being frequently situated at as high an elevation as 200 to 300 ft. above the lower. In a convenient spot in a War village a clear space is to be seen neatly swept and kept free from weeds, and surrounded with a stone wall, where the village tribunals sit, and the elders meet in solemn conclave. Dances also are held here on festive occasions. At Nongpi village there is a fine rubber tree, under whose hollow trunk there are certain sacred stones where the priest performs the village ceremonies.

The Bhoi and Lyngam villages are built in small clearings in the forest, the houses are close together and are built often in parallel lines, a fairly broad space being reserved between the lines of houses to serve as a street. One misses the pretty gardens of the War villages, for Bhois and Lyngams attempt nothing of the sort, probably because, unlike the Khasi, a Bhoi or Lyngam village never remains more than two or three years in one spot; generally the villages of these people are in the vicinity of the forest clearings, sometimes actually in the midst

the house of the *sumpoid*, where a *puja* is performed to some local deity, before the flesh is distributed. At Shongpung, when a tiger or a mithan is killed, the head is cut off, and is carried in triumph to a hill in the neighbourhood where there is a *dawan*, or altar, at the foot of an oak tree (*diang sning*). The head is displayed on the altar, and worship offered to U Ioi *Iyngdoh*, the God of the dolomhip.

The Khasis make use of an ingenious species of spring gun for killing game, the spring gun being laid alongside a deer path in the jungle. A string stretched across the path, when touched, releases a bolt and spring, which latter impels a bamboo arrow with great force across the path. This spring gun is called *ka riem sniat*. A pit-fall, with bamboo spikes at the bottom, is called *u Tlor lop*, and a trap of the pattern of the ordinary leopard trap is called *ka riem slang*. A snare attached to a long rope laid in a deer run is named *riem spreiah*.

There is also *ka riem pay*, the principle of which is that an animal is attracted by a bait to walk on to a platform; the platform sinks under the weight of the animal, and a bolt is released which brings down a heavy roof from above weighted with stones, which crush the animal to death.

There are several means employed in snaring birds; one of the most common is to smear pieces of bamboo with the gum of the jack-tree, the former being tied to the branches of some wild fruit tree, upon which, when the fruit is ripe, the birds light and are caught by the bird lime. This is called *ka riem thit*. Another is a kind of spring bow made of bamboo which is laid on the ground in marshy places, such as are frequented by snipe and woodcock. This form of snare is unfortunately most common. A third is a cage into which birds are lured by means of a bait, the cage being hidden in the grass, and the entrance being so contrived that the birds can hop in but not out again. This is called *ka riem sin*.

FISHING.

Although there are some Khasis who fish with rod and line, it may be said that the national method of fishing is to poison

the War country, it will be convenient to describe the land tenures and laws regarding land of each of these divisions separately. As land is always *jhoomed* by the Khasis and Lyngams from year to year, customs regarding land with these people are naturally very simple. Taking land in the high plateaux of the Khasi Hills first.—The lands are classified under two main divisions, (a) public and (b) private lands. The following are the different descriptions of lands in the first division:—

Ka ri Raj, or *ka ri Sheim*, which are State's, or Crown lands. These lands are intended for the support of the Sheim family, and they cannot be alienated. The Sirdars are, however, precluded by custom from levying a land tax on persons who cultivate such lands, the relation of landlord and tenant between the latter and their chiefs being unknown.

Ka ri Lyngdoh.—These lands are for the support of the Lyngdohs or priests of the State. In some Siemships, as in Mawiang Siemship, paddy is grown on these lands from which rice is obtained for the State puja.

Ri shnong, or village lands.—These lands are set apart to provide a supply of firewood, thatching grass, &c., and are the property of the village. The inhabitants of other villages are not allowed to enjoy the produce of such lands. Such lands can be cultivated by *ryots* of the village, but the latter possess only occupancy rights, and cannot transfer them.

Ki law kyntang.—These are sacred groves, situated generally near the summit of hills, composed of oak and rhododendron trees, which are held sacred (*kyntang*), it being an offence, or *sang*, for any one to cut timber in the groves, except for cremation purposes. These groves are the property of the villages.

(b.) Private Lands. These may be subdivided into *ri-kur*, or lands which are the property of the clan, and *ri kynti*, or family, or acquired landed property. In the Khasi Hills proper a very large proportion, certainly of the high lands, is the property of the clan; for instance, the high lands at Laitkor, which are the property of the Khar kunger and Kur kulang clans, whose ancestors the large memorial stones close to the Laitkor road commemorate, also the lands of the Thong Khlew clan, and many others.

772 insects, and to remain on this earth; but this idea of transmigration
774 of souls has been probably borrowed from the Hindus. Rivet
166 writes that although the ideas of a Godhead are not clearly
grasped, yet a supreme creator is acknowledged, and that the
[773] following is the tradition relating to the creation of man.
God in the beginning having created man, placed him on the
773 earth, but on returning to look at him, found he had been
destroyed by the evil spirit. This happened a second time,
whereupon the Deity created first a dog, then a man; and the dog,
who kept watch prevented the devil from destroying the man,
772 and the work of the Deity was thus preserved." The Khasis,
783 apparently, do not believe in punishment after death, at least,
786 there is no idea of hell, although the spirits of those who have
died under the ban of many crimes unatoned, being obliged to
wander about the earth in different forms, as noted above. The
774 spirits worshipped by the Khasis are many in number, those of
787 the mountains being specially numerous. The particular spirit
782 to be propitiated is ascertained by cock-breaking. The offering
acceptable to the spirit is similarly ascertained and in
like manner. If the particular sacrifice does not produce
the result desired, a fowl is sacrificed; the entrails being
then examined, an augury is drawn, and the sacrifice begins
afresh. As the process of cock-breaking is believed to be
peculiar* to the Khasis amongst the Assam hill tribes, a separate
[775] description of it is given in the Appendix. It should be
remarked that the Khasis never symbolise their gods by means
of images, their worship being offered to the spirit only. The
following are some of the principal spirits worshipped by the
[914] Khasis and Syntengs, omitting the spirits of deceased
ancestors such as *Ka Iawbei*, a *Thoolong*, and a *Suidnia*,
which will be described under the heading of ancestor-worship.

774 *Ubli umdih*—the god of the *State*, who is propitiated yearly
782 by the sacrifice of a goat and a cock.

Ubli umlongmar—god of water, used for drinking and cooking purposes. This god is similarly propitiated once a year, so that the water supply may remain pure.

* Sir Charles Lyall has pointed out that the Mikirs possess this custom; it is probably borrowed from the Khasis.

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This stone is apparently some rough gem which may be picked up by the Lyngams in the river beds. A rich man amongst them, however, is one who possesses a number of metal gongs, which they call *ningo*. For these they pay very high prices, Rs. 100 being quite a moderate sum for one of them. Being curious to see one of these gongs, I asked a *sirdar*, or head-man, to show me one. He replied that he would do so, but it would take time, as he always buried his gongs in the jungle for fear of thieves. Next morning he brought me a gong of bell metal, with carvings of animals engraved thereon. The gong when struck gave out a rich deep note like that of Burmese or Thibetan gongs. These gongs have a regular currency in this part of the hills, and represent to the Lyngams "Bank of England" notes. It would be interesting to try to ascertain what is their history, for no one in the Lyngam country makes them in these days. Is it possible that the Garos brought them with them when they migrated from Thibet? The gongs are well known in the Garo Hills, and I hear that when a *nokma*, or head-man, there dies his corpse is laid out upon them. They thus possess also an element of sanctity, besides being valuable for what they will fetch to the Garos or Lyngams. We may hope to hear more about them in Captain Playfair's account of the Garos.

The Lyngams do not tattoo. Their weapons are the large-headed Garo spear, the dao, and the shield. They do not usually carry bows and arrows, although there are some who possess them. They are by occupation cultivators. They sow two kinds of hill rice, red and white, on the hill-sides. They have no wet paddy cultivation, and they do not cultivate in terraces like the Nagas. They burn the jungle about February, after cutting down some of the trees and clearing away some of the debris, and then sow the paddy broadcast, without cultivating the ground in any way. They also cultivate millet and Job's-tears in the same way. With the paddy *thillim* are sown the first year. The egg plant, arum, ginger, turmeric, and sweet potatoes of several varieties are grown by them in a similar manner. Those that rear the lac insect plant *londoo* trees (Hindi *arhal dal*) in the forest clearings, and rear the insect thereon. Some of these people, however, are prohibited by a

Finally other earthly things are deified, and the cult of spirits increases in objects. If there is an unusually formed mountain anywhere, sacrifices are brought to it, since a kwuid lives there. And the spirit who inhabits the mountain is soon combined with the mountain itself, and then the mountain is worshipped and sacrifices are brought to it. The same thing happens with rivers. How easily a river god can be insulted and made angry by fishing or by crossing over to the other bank! Therefore the first thing to do is to bring the river god a sacrifice. The Khasi never make a picture, neither of stone nor of wood, which is supposed to represent their gods, but nevertheless they revere many powers of nature and phenomena of nature, and it is difficult to differentiate the extent to which the mountain or river is worshipped and the extent to which sacrifice is made to the spirit of the mountain or the river.

In everything that one calls bad luck or misfortune the Khasi see the work of evil spirits: in the bad harvest, in flood, in sickness. The spirits live in the primeval forest, in the steep inaccessible cliffs, in the rushing river, in the green tree. They come through the air in all weather. They give the tiger strength, the snake poison, the thicket fever, and they lurk in cholera for their victim.

These are the reasons for the many sacrifices and sacrificial customs of the Khasi all of which are only to bring about the reconciliation of the angered spirits. Prayers also occur during individual sacrificial scenes which one can conceive of as prayers of thanks or of praise, but these are exceptions.

The sacrifices are performed either by sacrificial priests (lyngdoh) or by old men who have experience. First one seeks out the spirit who

776 u Iyujong, the lame devil who lives in the thicket and tickles people to death,
Ka Ruh, the worst of all the demonesses (only among the Synteng),
u 'suid-lam-iaj, the executor of the commands of god, who has to fetch the souls into the other world,
u Thlen, the devil of wealth and comfort who can only be worshipped by human sacrifice,
Ka Ener, a demoness who brings violent death,
Ka Kyrti, the demoness who scratches and cuts, saws, and files (by pain in the intestines),
Ka Junai, the demoness of earthquakes,
Ka Niangriang, the demoness who causes children's illnesses (especially in the navel),
u 'suid briew or u 'suid ngon, the devil who attacks people in the early morning and causes stitches in the side or hoarseness,
u 'suid-kynta-maran, the devil who makes headaches,
u synhai bamon, an evil spirit,
Ka ramshandi, a demoness.

). Revered Powers of Nature:

778 The Sunatit River, to whom the kings of Mongstoin, Dangrin, and Nobosohpoh offer sacrifices.
the Khai-mara River among the Lar,
the Kopili River among the Synteng,
the Myntang River among the Synteng,
the Shillong Peak (mountain near Shillong),
the Mableng Mountain near Shillong,
the Kyllong Cliffs,
the Symper Mountain,
the mountain Pyddieng blei lyngdoh near Shangpung (Jaintia).

777 754 2. Methods of Warding Off Evil Spirits

The Khasi do not practise magic in the

533 S. : "Thou fledst into the thicket! Did that help thee?
Shyly thou retreatest before the brave crowd of hunters!"
All: "Ha, ha, ho, huh!"
S. : "Quickly indeed thou retreatest; quickly the pursuers pressed after thee and arrow and bow brought thee low."
All: "Ha, ha, ho, huh!"
S. : "O mistress! Why didst thou come hither? Thou gavest thyself over to death and destruction — but we rejoice and celebrate and exult!"

Thus it continues for a long time. When one person has sung until he is hoarse, another takes his place and continues the song.

124 Exhausted from the exertions of the hunt, exhausted from the activity of the parade home, hoarse from shouting and screaming, heated from the enjoyment of brandy, the crowd drags itself to the house of the hunter who placed the first arrow or shot in the wild animal. Sacrifice is made there to the village god and the slain animal is divided up. The first shooter (u nongsiat) receives the hind quarters, the second shooter (u nongbah) the front quarters of the animal.

In the Jaintia Hills the Synteng go to a hill in the neighborhood of the village when they have hunted and killed a tiger or a leopard. An altar is set up there under an oak tree and the head of the animal, which has been severed from its body, is placed on it and sacrificed to the u'lei lyngdoh (the god of the Dolloi district).

782 224

411 • 778 Arrow and bow are not only necessary weapons to the Khasi for hunting or pleasant sporting equipment for archery contests; Arrow and bow are also holy to him in a certain

[illegible] 411
[illegible] 998.

sense. For a [illegible] his entrance into life and at his departure from it both are used in the religious ceremonies. If a boy is born, a bow and three arrows are placed beside him at the name giving. (35) After various ceremonies, [illegible]

35. P.F. Stegmüller, "Aus dem religiösen Leben der Khasi" [The Religious Life of the Khasi], Anthropos, 1921-1922, pp. [illegible] ff.

which cannot be described here, the sacrificer gives the boy the bow and three arrows, and calls upon him to become a good shooter. At the end of all the ceremonies the bow and the arrows are carefully attached to the inside of the straw roof of the hut.

It should be mentioned that at a Khasi cremation (36) a bow and three arrows are also 411 364

36. P.F. Stegmüller, loc. cit., p. 430 ff.

used. They are kept in readiness with the other ceremonial objects of the dead, while the corpse is being shown for the last time to the participants in the funeral. As soon as the fire flames up on the funeral pyre, three arrows are also shot off: one towards the north, one towards the south, and the third towards the east. The Khasi call these arrows 'nam-tyrpem.

182 laden themselves with more than 60 to 65 pounds.

174 Many Khasi have to start during the afternoon because of the great distance to the market. They spend the night with acquaintances. In the dark they march by torch light. The torches consist of several igra, i.e., very thin bamboo tubes, saturated with petroleum and lighted. Or a large bamboo tube is filled with cloth that has been saturated in petroleum. The burning torches are swung in circles while the Khasi march so that only a glow is provided, but this prevents the torches from going out. The glow is quite sufficient for giving enough light for the road (foot path).

[216] Betel nuts are chewed [illegible] all the way and

4. The length of the road is also measured in "betel nuts."

water pipes are smoked during the rests.

163 b) The Market Place. It is not possible
161 to talk about a definite place where the Khasi usually hold the market. This varies considerably according to the region. First of all the place chosen for the market lies outside the village. By preference they hold their markets on high ground or some such safe place. A place that has once been chosen remains the
•[178] market place for that particular village. The market place is often found very close to the memorial stones, just as if the spirits of the ancestors honored there should offer aid and protection to the visitors to the market. On the southern slopes of the Khasi Mountains the market is often held on the bank of a river, for the reason that the Khasi come to these markets in boats. The market place in Mawsynram is quite isolated. Also the one in

leu duh (large market) in Shillong, in Nongkrem, 443
in Umlong, in Mangkheu, in Pomtiah, in Imnih, 805
etc. Thus each day is precisely established, and at the same time the market for the place concerned.

In the territory of the War the markets are held every fourth day in the following order: In Nongjiri, in Maubang, in Tyllap and in Shella. Here the week days are either named according to the market days or they say the day before the market day, the market day, the day after the market day and the day between the markets. Every Khasi in this district knows then without any doubt which day is meant.

2. Determining the time of day. As concerns the time of day during which the markets are held, no generally valid rule can be set up. This varies according to the individual places. In general from noon until late in the afternoon is the time for the chief market. The market places are usually still empty before 10 o'clock in the morning. The end is about 5 o'clock in the afternoon, if not earlier.

The duration of the markets results from what has been already said. In general [706] the duration of a large market is about six hours, while a small market lasts only about four hours.

f) Order at the Market or Market Peace. 943 978
Although there are no guards or other agents of order on duty at the Khasi markets, the great peace and order at even the largest Khasi markets seem most pleasant to everyone. I have never heard any complaint of foodstuffs or other objects for sale being stolen. The Khasi consider the market as something holy, as something to be respected, as something that belongs to everybody, which nobody can claim for his own. Attacks on a person's life also do not occur.

443 Quarrels and fights are exceptional. It is most
•778 natural to the Khasi not to disturb the peace of the markets, since the markets stand under the protection of the goddess. (Cf. The prayer in the introduction to this article.)[1] Also the memorial stones, in the shadow of which the markets are so often held, may exert some influence on the visitors to the markets, since the Khasi imagine themselves to be protected by the spirits of their ancestors and believe that any kind of disorder at the market would be avenged by these spirits.

443 Nearly all the men at the market are armed.
484 The reason for this lies in the fact that the
911 people are thus protected on the way to the market and are safe from the attacks of the "killers" (nongshohnoh), i.e., those who got out to murder people in order to dedicate their victims to the devil snake. Therefore the visitors to the market never go alone but always in groups. The men are armed with the ka wait (a chopping knife), with which they know how to defend themselves very well.

4. The Law of the Market

443 a) The Market Toll. All sellers who at-
651 tend the market must pay a contribution on entering the market place. Only those inhabitants of the village or district in which the market is held are excepted. This market tax is paid partly in money and partly in products. In many villages it is paid only in cash. The amount of the tax laid is 2 or 3 paisas, often even one anna (5--6--10 pfennigs, German peace evaluation). Only betel nuts and pepper leaves are preferred to money. In many villages everything is paid in produce, insofar as foodstuffs are concerned. The market tax collector reaches

[1] [See Gurney 116, pp 1-2--Author]

are kept by the S'iem sīd. Everything that comes in, such as taxes, market contributions, or that which comes in through the administration of justice must be given to her. She may dispose of it as she sees best, while the S'iem receives from her the money necessary for paying the costs of the government. 793 643

The S'iem sīd is the sole authority in matters of religion. She must watch over the religious sacrifices and determine the time and place for them; /facing p. 892 Fig. 1. $\frac{2}{1}$ The Sacrifice (Nongkrem Puja) among the Khasi/ /893/ the state sacrifices are held in her house or in front of her house, and they must be performed in her presence. The actual S'iam is her son or nephew or even more distant male relative, who is chosen by the "state council," the Mentris.

After the death of the S'iem sīd, this office passes to her oldest living daughter, and lacking such to the eldest daughter of her eldest daughter, and lacking such granddaughters to the oldest daughter, and so forth. In case there are no daughters or granddaughters, the oldest living sister takes the office; if there are no sisters, then the oldest daughter of the oldest sister of the mother of the deceased S'iem sīd is the successor, and so it goes further. In this way the office always remains within the royal lineage.

In the house of the S'iem sīd (called ka-īing sīd), which is one of the largest and most attractive in the Khasi Hills, there is a post in the middle which reaches from the floor to the ridge of the roof. It is called u rishot Blei (post, pillar of god) and serves at the same time as the altar before which many sacrifices are performed. The pillar is nothing other than the trunk of the Khasi oak (ka dieng sning; botanical name: castanopsis sp.), which is holy to the Khasi. If the house of the S'iem sīd burns down, or if it is built up anew, a new pillar must be brought. Only certain families (jaid) have the privilege of cutting down the trees for this purpose. As soon as it is cut down, dancing and music begins; the trunk is covered with a cloth and carried away on a carrying frame. Hundreds of persons participate in this. As long as the pillar is not set up, it is guarded night and day. A person or an animal might jump over it and that would be sang (= taboo); the trunk would be defiled and another tree would have to be cut down. If something dreadful happens in the kingdom, or if a danger threatens, the S'iem sīd goes with six official sacrificial priests of the kingdom Nongkrem before the post and offers sacrifice there in order to avert the evil. 778 782 796 [824]

The foregoing has to be mentioned in order to give a better understanding of the following. 796

The Nongkrem Puja usually takes place in the month of May. 782

†[See category 116, p.14 --- Analyst]

7: Becker--2d M-4, 5 (1910-11) 1924 AR7 Khasi AR7

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Fig. 6. A Holy Grove and Part of the Village Raliang.

423 manure, and primarily for breeding, since the oxen cannot be dis-
23 pensed with for the cultivation of the fields, especially of the rice fields, where the soaked earth must be trampled to a slimy mush. From the fowl the eggs are particularly prized, since they find an almost daily use in the questioning of oracles in cases of misfortune and sickness. (3) Hens, pigs and goats serve for sacrificial purposes, (4)

3. P.R.T. Gurdon, The Khasis, (London 1907) pp. 221 ff.; Becker, "Das Eierwerfen der Khasi," /Egg throwing Among the Khasi/, Anthropos, Vols. 12-13 (Vienna, 1917-18), pp. 494 ff.; P.F. Stegmiller, "Aus dem religiösen Leben der Khasi" /The Religious Life of the Khasi/ Anthopos Vol. 16-17 (1921-1922), pp. 418 ff.

4. Becker, "Die Nongrem-Puja in den Khasi-Bergen" /The Nongkrem Puja in the Khasi Mountains/, Anthropos, Vol. 4, (Vienna, 1909) No. 5-6, pp. 898 ff.; Stegmiller, loc cit.

and they are also a welcome addition to rice at all festive occasions such as arrow shooting, (5) at the name giving, /131/ at weddings,

5. Becker, Im Stromtal etc., /In the Valley, etc./, pp. 298 and 387.

and at the cremation of the dead.

421 Further the various huts belong to the family property, the erec-
613 tion and maintenance of which is the work of the members of the clan, the brothers, nephews, and grandsons. The hut of the clan mother is likewise considered the center of the whole family, and its possession forms the outer sign of the dominance of the clan mother. Here she holds the family sacrifices and also keeps the special treasures. These are considered to be those things which are connected with the religious cult. Special reverence and sacrifice is due the oldest clan mother, as the original founder of the clan, and her brother in each clan family; in addition there are a series of other spirits which vary according to the family clan. The branch of the Khasi people who live in the Jaintia Mountains, the so-called Synteng, have probably pre-
78 served the old Khasi customs the most faithfully. There in the hut of the
78 clan mother are found the following utensils for the service of the divinities, who are nearly always feminine; mats, little baskets for rice, gourd bottles, a little basket made of bamboo cane and decorated with feathers, as well as antlers of deer or antelopes. The latter are fastened to the wall; they are supposed to be the seat of the

776 778 divinities of the forest and of the chase. The little basket is attached to a post in the hut; the special divinities of the clan-family are supposed to have their dwelling there; two hazelnut twigs fastened underneath symbolize their power. The gourd bottles are used as containers for the sacrificial drink of rice liquor. (6)

6. Cf. Die Nongkrem-Puja, /The Nongkrem Puja/, loc cit.

422 [301] As treasures, which are handed down from generation to generation, are considered the rich ornaments of gold and silver, the heavy chains of coral, and the silk scarves, which are worn by the women at dancing ceremonies.

Also those things which the family huts contain in the way of furnishings and utensils, such as baskets, mats, lances, shields, arrows and bows, and brass pots for cooking and for water, earthen containers and brass plates are considered common property of the family.

421 425 488 /132/ The clan mother at the time has the entire property in her hands; she is the legal and sole guardian and manager of the property. Nothing can be lent even without her permission. No part of either the movable or immovable family possessions may be sold without her agreement. For the execution of the proper legal deed, as she is often ignorant of writing, she must place her fingerprint. Nothing may ever be given away: that would be an insult to the clan divinity since that would not mean treasuring and honoring their property but giving it away as being of no value. As a punishment for that the clan /stamm/ would also lose its other possessions and then live in poverty and disgrace. The individual members of the clan could sometimes be recruited for work for other clan-families as a kind of slave (mrau). But they may not be taken up in their society as they do not belong to that clan and the clan gods of that family would not permit it. Therefore if, for example, a clan-family has rice fields which they do not cultivate and would gladly give to poorer relatives, they must at least receive the smallest rent as a charge for it. This consists annually of a gourd bottle of rice liquor, which has the value of about 70 pfennigs to honor the household divinities.

Before the clan mother gives her permission for the sale of common property, she listens to the advice of the other members of the clan. Actually according to the old tribal custom things should be as little sold as given away. It is said that in ages past the original ancestors, whom the individual clans reverence as divinities, apportioned out this their needs of field and wood, and these are supposed to form their unsalable clan property (nongrim). To let it get out of one's possession would therefore be insulting the gods. However, that

421 425

his wife and children. ooo

2. Holy Pieces of Land and Forest

A special kind of land property is still encountered in the Khasi and Jaintia Mountains. These are pieces of land and forests which are considered sang or kyntang, forbidden or holy, thus kyndeu sang, khlau kyntang, forbidden fields, holy forests. They are also named in connection with the name god, for example, khlau Blei, forest of the gods, which, to a certain extent, might offer the key to their purpose and meaning. The hands of man are not supposed to disturb this kind of property; this property is sacred to the gods and at the most may be used in their service. 423 778

It is not easy to trace the origin and beginnings of these reserves. But several solutions may be found in regard to sections of land. When the /136/ Catholic mission station was founded in the village of Schella which is located on a steep mountain slope, it was hard to find a place that was halfway suitable and big enough to build even a small dwelling on it. Finally the missionary discovered such a place somewhat outside the village. But then there was a new difficulty. The place was the cremation area for the dead and therefore was sang /taboo/. The spirits of the dead would punish every intruder severely. The people were finally persuaded to burn their dead somewhere else, but it was more difficult to find any who were ready to help with the work of the building. Even those whom the missionary finally persuaded to help still suffered heavily from the fear of the punishment of the gods and continuously one or the other of them had imaginary illnesses. [797] [764] [784]

In the cases of more extensive pieces of land, the snake worshippers (thlen), who carry on their dreadful activities in the Khasi Mountains, (8) may offer an explanation sometimes. If such a person is 423 784 [776] [782]

8. Im Stromtal des Brahmaputra, /In the River Valley of the Brahmaputra/, pp. 76ff.

convicted of murder, which he has committed in the service of the snake god in order to sacrifice the blood of the slain person to him, and if he wishes to free himself from the conviction, he can do nothing other than sell all his movable and immovable property. The latter thus becomes sang. Nobody would dare to take over the fields and gardens, to plant anything there, or to touch any fruit on that property. Thus in Cherrapunji a native Catholic was able to take

presentation of the written statement of the chieftain and the village elders that they would have no objection to it. The avaricious renter of the divine land mentioned above was despised by all. 423 734 797

As concerns the holy forests, which often extend picturesquely from the highest peak down the slope and are overgrown with gnarled oaks and bright colored rhododendron, no tree may be felled there; at the most, fallen wood or wood torn down by a storm or already rotten wood may be taken. The spirits of the forest, as punishing gods, will revenge every offense. Tigers and leopards, apes, bears, and snakes enjoy an undisturbed existence here. The only case in which wood may be cut in these divine woods is for the religious cremation ceremonies of the dead. It is the custom of the Khasi to set fire often to great areas in order to fertilise the ground with the ashes of grasses, trees, and shrubs without regard for the new growth of trees, and to make potato fields there for a year or two or to grow mountain rice, millet, or something similar and then to leave the field fallow again. Thus this is a clever precautionary rule, since there might otherwise be cases when there might be no wood for cremating the dead. 778 776 [164] [341]

(Continuation follows)

/300/ Family Property and Maternal Rights
by C. Becker S.D.S., Würzburg

Gurdon says, (10) that these holy groves were formerly the property of a village. That is not always so as the following case will demonstrate. I am also relating this because it grants us a deeper look into the whole customs of the clan under discussion. 778 423 613 797

10. The Khasis, p. 87.

Several decades ago, a Khasi who had become a Protestant, U Jacob Shai by name, was installed as a clerk with the English government official in Jowai. In order to assure his family a better living than just his meager salary, he yearned for land. By birth from Jongushen in the War territory, he remembered that he could obtain his aim in the neighboring village Syndai from the family clan Umliang. So one day he went thither. After the customary greetings, and refreshment with a water pipe and betel nut and conversation about various indifferent matters, he mentioned his desire. "I know," he said in the polite language of even these simple natural men, "I know the goodness and the good name of your clan /Stamm/ and the elders

778 423 613 797 of your clan; you are glad to come to the help of others everywhere and thereby have prepared honor and fame for your whole clan /Sippe/, for your clan gods and goddesses, and for your ancestors of both sexes. You are blessed with grandchildren and great grandchildren. I rejoice in your good fortune and I wish that the gods and goddesses of your clan /Stamm/ will be favorably inclined for all times. Therefore I dare to come to you and to make a request of you; I have only one request: nga don tang kawei ka jingkyrpad! Namely, I need a piece of land, so that I can give my grandsons and granddaughters something to eat. My own field does not suffice for so many mouths. I have noticed that a piece of forest lies here /301/ unused. I have inquired to whom it belongs and the village elders said to me that it was the property of the famous family clan Umliang. I honor you, therefore, and beg you: can I receive this forest according to the law and custom of the clan?"

Questions from the clan mother and the family elders followed this speech. Finally it was clear to them what piece was meant. "That is the khlau sang, the forest of the gods," they cried. "Certainly that belongs to our clan property, but as you yourself know, we can neither rent nor sell it. We cannot and do not even dare say, cultivate the land. But we also cannot prevent you from doing it or forbid you. That piece of land is presented to the gods; they will revenge themselves on anyone who removes it from their cult; they themselves will guard over it so that no one will seize it."

This answer satisfied U Shai completely. He had no fear of the punishment of the forest gods; he had just wanted to make certain whether the family clan would put difficulties in his way or would even bring complaints before the English government. The forest was soon arable. Fire transformed the wood and the bushes, the high grasses and the vines into ashes; oranges and lemons, pineapples, and bananas were planted and after a few years the land brought in from the sale of the fruit a sum, considerable for those conditions, of 800 to 1,000 reichsmarks a year.

The family clan Umliang was still faithful to their native faith. As the other heathen did, so they observed the undertaking of U Shai with fear and anxiety. They believed the gods must bestir themselves and the forest would devour the miscreant with his family. That did not occur. It could not be avoided that in this way the belief in their gods and native customs received a jolt among the heathen and many of them went over to the viewpoint that they might also do it.

After a while a young Khasi with such advanced views married /302/ into the family clan Umliang. Meanwhile 40 years had passed. The old father U Siai was already dead. The piece of land planted by him, as it was not actually family property, according to the special customs of the War had passed on not only to the youngest daughter but also to his son Jacob U Shai and his sisters. On their side they had helped their father in the clearing of the forest. The siblings were Catholic. The young man mentioned above brought a legal complaint against the siblings before the English government official in Jowai a few years ago: the forest made arable by Jacon U Shai and transformed into a fruit orchard had been illegally acquired and is the property of the clan of his wife; he demanded a piece of the land back for the family Umliang and for the other piece a corresponding annual rent must be paid.

In reply the siblings Shai could claim that the affair was past the legal time limit. According to tribal custom the time limit on small matters was 10 years, for greater matters 30 years. In addition the main point on their side was that the piece of land in question was khlau sang, forest of the gods, and the family Umliang could not ask anything for it. For this the Shai siblings lacked witnesses, whereas the Umliangs produced several heathen witnesses for the simple declaration of the right of possession. The case was long drawn out. It was finally decided against the Shai siblings and they were declared deprived of the property. The missionary P. Benedikt Neher now concerned himself with the affair. He brought more than 100 witnesses, all clan mothers or village elders, who were ready to swear that that piece of land was a forest of the gods as long as man could remember. The English judge, whom he informed of this, decided that this was a basis for proposing a revision and change of the judgment, but the Shai siblings had lost all their money in the previous trial to pettifogging lawyers and did not have the spirit to begin again. With oriental equanimity they accepted the loss and thus the affair remained.

/303/ The case is instructive anyway, insofar as it shows that the so-called holy forests are also found in the possession of individual family clans; how they are valued by them as long as they remain faithful to their animistic views and how they are able to make their right of possession to them valid even after years.

3. Customs Concerning the Right of Inheritance

When the clan mother dies, the youngest daughter always receives the inheritance among the Khasi. If for any reason the youngest daughter cannot take possession, her next youngest sister follows. If there are

425 613 If after discussions lasting weeks all the problems involved have been settled, the agreements decided on are finally completed with the customary ceremonial. It was mentioned above, what objects [178] for the religious cult are to be found in the hut of the clan mother.[1] The little basket plaited of bamboo cane, which is considered the special seat of the divine ancestors of the clan. /Clan/ is not divided. /309/ Another, similar basket is made. By sacrifice of goats and pigs, these divinities are then entreated so that a part of them may take up their dwelling in this basket for the protection of the newly constructed clan. If the sacrificial priest can announce the agreement of the deceased spirits with the division from the oracle of the entrails of the animals and by egg throwing, then this basket is brought to the new clan hut. On another day one of the two hazelnut poles is then taken for the new hut with further sacrifices. Each of the two separated parties must fetch a new pole to go with the other one. In a like way the existent sacrificial utensils, such as rice baskets, mats, and gourd bottles are divided. With this ceremony the agreements made about the division of the other property are considered legally existent. Each party now goes his own way independent of the other. Certain relationships of [582] friendship and kinship still remain in existence; however, the bar to marriage, which otherwise would make impossible the marriage between members of the same family clan without regard to the degree of relationship, is no longer in existence.

425 797 796 If, at the conversion of one part of the members of the clan to the Christian religion, the division of property can be accomplished legally, it is better to insist on it. The members who have become Christian are more readily protected from disadvantageous treatment. Even if they should take part of the fields for themselves in separate management, the part of the clan that remained heathen could demand this back years later. Enmity, hate, and revenge would then follow. Without the formal ceremony combined with the sacrifices mentioned a Khasi does not recognize a division as legal. Since Christians cannot participate in such a sacrificial ceremony, there is nothing to do other than to have this ceremony undertaken while those seeking to be baptized are still catechumens. Before they are accepted then into the church by baptism, the heathen cult objects that were brought into the clan hut must be removed. "To /310/ this most important ceremony, "the missionary of the Synteng territory, P. Benedikt Neher S. D. S., once related, "I usually went myself if it was possible for me to or sent a European sister of the Order. Thereby the ceremony acquired a great deal

[1] [See category 116, pp 4, 5 — Analyst]

9: Godwin-Austen G-3 (no date) 1872 AR7 Khasi AR7

764 I never saw the Khasis engaged in raising a stone into the upright position, but I saw the spars which had formed a sort of cradle on which the stones forming the monument erected by the Nongtariang clan previously alluded to had been dragged from the spot where they had been quarried. They consisted of strong curved limbs of trees roughly smoothed and rounded, and would present a very small surface to friction. These stones had been taken from the side of a hill near, and had apparently been wedged out of the face of a step in the exposed sand-stone strata.

It may be as well that I should here give some account of the funeral rites of the Khasis, which will show there is no connection between them and the monuments I have been describing, and with which the other stone erections have no doubt been often confounded. In their funeral rites there is much that is wonderfully strange, and to those unacquainted with their superstitions, appears unmeaning. There can be no doubt but the Khasis have a very strong belief in a future state, and to say that they have no religion, as has been stated by some writers, is erroneous. True, they have no temples for either worship or idols, the religion of the people is principally a demon worship, and we find the Khasi ever in communion with or in the power, as he supposes, of the spirits of those who have gone before him. While, added to these spirits of their ancestors are numberless demons, male and female, ever ready, if not propitiated, to bring evil upon himself or his undertakings, and whose power even extends over the spirits of the dead. Every dark shady wood, every stream, every conspicuous hill has its presiding demon, which in many instances gives the name to the site. Thus, the hill of Lārū, in North Jaintia, beyond Nongjinghi, is the abode of a one-legged demon, whom to see is death, but who was occasionally heard in the dense forest that clothed the northern steep face of the mountain, so said the credulous villagers of Nongtūng.

764 The dead are burnt on a funeral pyre, the logs of which are arranged very regularly, and the body lies in a sort of bed formed by them.

The calcined bones and ashes are collected and placed in an earthen vessel (small "ghara"), and are generally buried in some adjacent spot, a stone being placed over the vase for security; they do not, however, remain permanently in this place. Every family or clan has a separate receptacle for these remains, constructed in several ways, but always covered with a heavy slab of stone: these receptacles are called "Mao-bah," the great stone "Mao-shíing," a bone depository—lit., the "bone stone."

M. Sehlagintweit has fallen into an error regarding the dolmen-shaped structures, and was not aware that this form is so

pendable water supply. Villages are about two to five miles apart, and have no boundary markers. In the past, villages contained semipublic buildings and grounds: the home of the village priest (also the home of a chief if he resided in that village), the village marketplace, and tree groves, cremation grounds, or other awesome spots that were believed to be inhabited by supernatural beings. Villages today may have also one or more Christian churches, government social welfare buildings, and schools. Formerly, villages were entered through a guarded gateway; this is no longer the case, and paths feed into villages from all directions. Often several villages are nucleated into one large unit, named and also described as a "village." These were once defense units, but were so uncohesive otherwise that institutionalized rivalry obtained among the component villages. Now, they have been integrated through the agency of all-village public services, especially schools. **Housing.** The traditional Khasi house is entered through a door at the rounded end of a U-shaped ground plan, and is about 20 feet at widest extent; it is about 30 feet deep, and is elliptical or hogback in profile. Its walls are of stone blocks cemented with mud. The roof of grass thatch, supported by a bamboo frame, overhangs the walls on their outside down to about three feet above the ground. The house is divided into two parts: the front one-third is on the ground level, floored either with stone blocks or tamped earth, and is used for storage of occupational instruments and as a shelter for poultry. The rear two-thirds is raised four feet on piles of stone blocks to a platform of planks, and is partitioned into six rooms, comprising a kitchen, areas for storage of food and water, and sleeping quarters. Furniture is minimal, and the house is totally undecorated. There are no windows, and no smoke vents. A house generally has a companion shed, walled of wood and grass matting and thatched with grass. This serves as a pigsty, but it may be partitioned also to house cows, and it may have a loft for fuel storage. Compounds often contain garden plots, and are fenced around with stone or bamboo and mud. Nowadays, the traditional house has given way to Western-style bungalows of wood and tin, especially in and around Shillong. [Cf. Mukherjee et al. 1941.]

ECONOMY. The Khasi economy is a market economy based on agriculture, and most Khasis are primary producers, sellers, middlemen, and/or providers of services in connection with markets. Khasis are often multioccupational: they produce goods for partial subsistence, and also play some part in trade. **Agriculture.** On the Shillong plateau, the major field crops are potatoes, maize, millets, and dry rice, still produced mostly through swidden farming, with a two- to three-year period of fallow, but increasingly through continuous use of a single field with the aid of ma-

17: Banerjee E-5 (1955) 1962 AR7 Khasi AR7
Smit

THE KHASI FESTIVAL OF 'POMBLANG'

S. BANERJEE

INTRODUCTION

The Khasi inhabit the upland of the central part of the United Khasi and Jaintia Hills district of Assam. They reckon descent through mother and the youngest daughter (Ka khadduh) of the house is the custodian of the ancestral property. Belief in the existence of spirits is strong among them and the causes of diseases are ascertained by taking recourse to the process of divination. They are ruled by different categories of Chief. The *Siem* is the highest official responsible for the administration of the state but a few small states are also governed by *Sirdars* with same powers as vested in the former although does not possess the same status. It is interesting to note that their priest whose rank is next to *Siem*, have also been allotted to perform this secular duties in some of the regions of the Khasi country. The Chief function through their respective council comprising elected members from different administrative units. He is rather subservient to this body as he is liable to be censured or even dismissed, if his activities are not in conformity with the Khasi traditional usage. Most of his directives are implemented through the assistance of his subordinates who are in-charge of various sections of the State. The Khasi place his grievance first to these junior officers for redress and justice, after which an appeal can be preferred to the *Siem* or any other higher officer as the case may be. One of the eminent States of the Khasi people known as Khyriem, where this festival is celebrated, consists of eight units for administrative convenience under the supervision of different grades of officials who participated in this celebration along with the *Siem* as representatives of the people.

The Khasi festival of *Pomblang* (Goat killing) described below used to be celebrated at one time in Shillong when the Khasi states of Khyriem and Mylliem were not separated. The first chief of the Khyriem state U Singh Manik shifted his headquarters to Nongkrem village after partition of the kingdom, which occured before the arrival of the British. He again moved to Langkerdem after a brief stay at the village of Lyngshing. He performed this festival as long as he was there, transferring it again to Nongkrem where he re-settled again. It was celebrated here for a long time and consequently it was named after this village. Although the ruling family had later on shifted its residence about sixty years ago to the present village Smit, during the time of U Klur Singh, Siem, it is performed regularly as *Nongkrem dance* which was observed by the author from 21st June to 25th June, 1955.

OBJECT OF THE FESTIVAL

It is being held every year since the days of U Shillong who was supposed to be the founder of original Khyriem State. They celebrate it to perpetuate his memory and pay homage with a view to ensure rain, good harvest, eliminating diseases and famine. He was worshipped along with other ancestors with view to guide the present Chief in his discharge of his duties and for the welfare of the people.

The house of Siem (iing-sad) where the rites are observed, is considered sacred. It consists of a big-hall (shlur) in the centre, surrounded by rooms. One of these on the north is used as a kitchen room (iing-chetja) where ritual

17: Banerjee E-5 (1955) 1962 AR7 Khasi AR7
Smit

objects are stored while that of the wet (kynram blang) was meant exclusively for sacrificial goats. There is a very big circular courtyard in front of the building where the members of the royal family as also other boys and spinsters hold a ritual dance. The function is always held during the moonlit period of May or June and the actual dates are fixed in consultation with the Chief priest (*Sohblei*) in such a way that the first day—*Pamtiah** always coincides with the market day of Shillong Chota Bazar. The dates of the festival is then communicated to the in-charge of different units of his territory, through a wooden stick '*kyrwoh*' having a few knots of cane-strips, as a form of summons for attending the festival for five days at Smit along with subjects under their jurisdiction.

Important Participant

The responsibility of performing this ritual rests on the High-priestess (*Ka Siem Sad*) who is succeeded by her eldest daughter. Different ritual objects are procured by her, well in advance and it is obligatory on her part to join the ceremonial dancing, in which her daughter may also officiate on her behalf. U Shillong is worshipped by the chief priest while the other ancestors are invoked by lesser priests. The musicians (*Dhulia*) besides their normal duties, take part in the worship of the ancestors and they are presented with silk turban, jacket, cloth, by the ruling family for the services rendered during the festival. The *Siem* has no especial role except to supervise and evoke U Shillong for the welfare of the community. He is required to perform certain sacrifices, failing which his heir-apparent (*Siem kynnah*) does the same. He along with his sister (High priestess) abstain from taking rice during the period of celebration presumably to observe the sanctity of this festival as also to ensure the successful conclusion of the function.

Ritual Materials

The festival derives its name from the sacrifice of a large number of goats some of which were supplied from the State fund and from different units of the territory. Formerly at least fifty goats were required and each unit had a specific allotment but owing to the economic difficulty that the Khasi are experiencing, the number of goats sacrificed hardly exceeds twenty-five. The goats collected from the different units, are presented to the Chief at the midnight of the third day. Rice-beer, dried fish, fermented-rice, betel leaves together with nuts are also important ritual objects in this celebration.

Description of the Festival

The commencement of the festival was marked by the distribution of dried, fish (suit dokha) to the persons assembled on the occasion, in the evening of *Pamtiah* (*i.e.* 21st June, 1957). This was followed by the dropping of rice-beer by the Chief priest over the fire place of central hall known as *Ka suit-ka shor*

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*A week consists of eight days in Khasi Calender the names are according to the places where markets are held in Khasi Hills.

Name	Market
1. Pamtiah	Shillong Chota Bazar.
2. Umni	Cherrapunji.
3. Yew-duh	Shillong Burra Bazar.
4. Lyngka	Barapani.
5. Nongkrem	Nongkrem.
6. Mawlong	Laban (Shillong).
7. Rynghep	Cherrapunji Chota Bazar.
8. Shillong	Laitlyng kot.

20: Hunter G-4 (no date) 1897 AR7 Khasi AR7

175 Khásiás, have, ever since the measures of improvement which
648 followed, remained peaceable and contented.

General Aspect of the District.—The District consists
133 almost entirely of hills, only a very small portion lying in the plains. The slope of the hills on the southern side is steep, until a table-land is met with at an elevation of about 4000 feet. Higher up there is another plateau at Máo-flang, ten miles to the eastward of which, and in the same mountain range, the Civil Station of Shillong is situated at an elevation of 4900 feet above sea level. On the northern side of the hills are two plateaux, one between 1000 and 2000 feet below the level of Shillong, and the second lower down, about 3000 feet above sea level. In general features all these plateaux are much alike, and consist of a succession of undulating downs, broken
137 here and there by the valleys of the larger hill streams. In the higher ranges, where the hills have been denuded of forest, the country is covered with short grass, which becomes longer and more rank in the lower elevations. A remarkable feature in the
[778] aspect of the country throughout the hills is the numerous sacred groves which superstition has preserved from time immemorial from the destructive hand of the woodcutter. These sacred groves contain beautiful timber-trees of various kinds, rare orchids, rhododendrons, and wild cinnamon. On the more elevated table-lands, pine trees and stunted oak are met with; and in the lower hills, in every direction, are dense forests of the usual Indian trees, containing valuable timber.

134 The geological formation is mainly granitic, with stratified rocks
135 of sandstone, limestone, and shale. The coal-beds rest on trap and metamorphic rocks. The prevailing surface soil is a red ferruginous loam.

133 Mountains.—The principal mountain ranges and highest peaks in the Khási and Jáintiá Hills are as follow:—(1) The Shillong range—height of principal peak, 6449 feet above sea level. (2) Dingiei range—principal peak, 6400 feet. (3) Máo-thad-rái-shán range—highest peak, 6297 feet. (4) Láo-syn-niá range—highest peak, 5775 feet. (5) Láit-máo-doh range—highest peak, 5377 feet. (6) Láo-ber-sát—highest peak, 5400 feet. (7) Láo-bah range—highest peak, 4464 feet. (8) Lyng-ker-dem range—highest peak, 5000 feet. (9) Lúm-baiong range—highest peak, 4646 feet. (10) Máo-syn-rám range—highest peak, 5810 feet.

The principal mountains are:—(1) Rap-leng—height, 5671 feet.